

AN

IMPARTIAL REVIEW

OF THE

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LIFE AND WRITINGS,

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CHARACTER,

OF THE LATE

REV. MR. JOHN WESLEY.

interspersed with a Variety of *curious, entertaining,*
and AUTHENTIC, ANECDOTES. 7

TO WHICH WILL BE ADDED,

Copy of his LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT,
With STRICTURES and REMARKS.

In TWO PARTS.

PART I.

Written and collected by his NEPHEW,
JOHN ANNESLEY COLET.

L O N D O N:

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[Price ONE SHILLING.]

IMPARTIAL REVIEW

THE LANCET

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A D D R E S S

To the public in general, and in particular to
the people called METHODISTS.

NOTHING can be more interesting than an account of the lives of great men, and nothing more instructive than when they have been eminent for *learning, humanity,* and *PIETY*. In the Rev. Mr. WESLEY, (whom we now justly lament, yet not as those sorrowing without hope of soon meeting him in the blissful regions of eternal joy and happiness!) was united, as in a center, an assemblage of every virtue and accomplishment that could dignify or adorn human nature. Whether we view him in the multifarious characters of a *gentleman, a scholar, a philosopher, a poet, an historian, or divine,* and above all, as a CHRISTIAN and a GOOD MAN! we shall find much to admire, but more to love! As a gentleman, he was a pattern of politeness. As a scholar, of the greatest erudition: the very elegant simplicity of his style and manners was a perfect antidote to the affected pedantry of learning. As a philosopher, much might be said in his praise, if much was necessary after the very honorable testimonies of an *Archbishop SECKER* and a celebrated PROFESSOR at Oxford! He sought wisdom in the simplicity of truth! bold enough to attack the COPERNICAN and NEWTONIAN systems of the UNIVERSE!

Nil est in intellectu, quod non prius fuit in sensu.

ARIST.

The

A D D R E S S, &c.

The Rev. Mr. WESLEY has established a NAME that will be transmitted to posterity, as the greatest ornament of the age it embellished, and the glory of the people he enlightened! A name so eminently distinguished both by abilities and virtue, that, while we are lost in admiring the amazing stupendousness of the one, the other is opposed, and we are equally divided or lost in ASTONISHMENT and LOVE!

John Annesley Colet.



P R E F A C E.

THE foregoing Address, which, with the title-page, is an exact copy (typographical errors excepted) of a hand-bill circulated among the Methodists and the Public at large, has given great offence to some interested in a similar publication, from whom I have met with very illiberal treatment, and violent opposition.—I appeal to every impartial and unprejudiced member of the society, whether it contains any reflection on the character of Mr. Wesley. Does it reflect on the Methodists or Methodism?—No. Have I cautioned the public against any similar production, declaring it spurious and imperfect?—No. Then on what reasonable grounds am I opposed with such violent rancour; such unchristian malevolence? Was this spirit of persecution also in Christ Jesus? Was this the principle which marked the conduct of your much-lamented father, during a long and useful ministry?—Is this doing as they would be done by?

Some have carried their asperity yet farther, adding falsehood to persecution, insinuating, that I am no relation of Mr. Wesley. I shall not stop to
prove

prove what is well known to them; but, such as may doubt my claim, I refer to Mr. Wesley's sister. On what reasonable ground am I then opposed?—Because he is a relation of Mr. Wesley, therefore will we crush him! He is a relation to Mr. Wesley, therefore he has no right, or claim, to any thing belonging or relating to him:—We are heirs to every thing—but his virtues! We will monopolize (with every thing else) even the property of his name. As to my work being spurious, because I am not in possession of Mr. Wesley's MS. papers—the idea is ridiculous in the highest degree: as it is a notorious fact, that every thing, materially relating to Mr. Wesley, has been published already in his annual journals and monthly magazines: So that it is truly a mighty valuable acquisition to boast being in possession of imperfect MSS. which have been correctly printed. Besides the circumstances of their situation precludes the possibility of impartiality.

With respect to the abilities of the gentlemen who are to superintend this authentic work, I shall say nothing: only that, if I am rightly informed, and we may form a judgement of their writing from their preaching, little is to be expected:—I will now say something of my own claim to the public attention. As a relation, I may be supposed to know something:—I

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am also in possession of family anecdotes, and other materials, which Mr. Wesley did not think necessary to communicate to these gentlemen. I will venture to foretel, that, when their work makes its appearance, the world will be favoured with a dull uninteresting history of METHODISM, &c. &c. which almost every Methodist has already by heart, and which will be still less entertaining to the public. I do not intend entirely to omit this, as it is so interwoven with his life and public character, that it will be impossible to avoid it; but I will not dwell too much on a subject which would afford little or no entertainment, either to the world at large, or the Methodists in particular; it would not be much to the taste of the man of the world, and would be making the Methodist pay for what he has already in his possession.

I shall just add, that I hope there are those among the Methodists, who had so much love for him when living, and so much respect for his memory now dead, as not to suffer his relations to be overborne by the supercilious importance of a few interested persons. — I love the Methodists for Mr. Wesley's sake; and I believe the greater part of the Methodists will protect a relation against the injustice

injustice and insolence of tho'e amongst them, who, while they abound in Faith and Grace, are deficient in every good work, and even destitute of HUMANITY and COMMON HONESTY !

This First Part is chiefly introductory, not having had time properly to arrange my materials, or to make the necessary references to the Reverend Mr. Wesley's writings, and other authentic papers.

The Second Part will contain an account of his Family, Life, Travels, Ministry, and a variety of entertaining matter : with observations and reflections.

Those Gentlemen, who with so much liberality have interested themselves in suppressing this humble performance, I beg leave to inform, that, not being influenced by the same Christian spirit, I have omitted many Anecdotes, &c. (which would not reflect much to their honour,) because I was unwilling to give offence ; but I am not sure that I shall not insert them in the Second Part, if farther provoked.

J. A. C.

C O P Y of the W I L L

OF THE LATE

Reverend Mr. J O H N W E S L E Y;

*Extracted from the Registry of the Prerogative Court
of Canterbury.*

In the Name of God, Amen. I, JOHN WESLEY, Clerk, sometime Fellow of Lincoln-College, Oxford, revoking all others, appoint this to be my Last Will and Testament.—I give all my books now on sale, and the copies of them, (only subject to a rent-charge of eighty-five pounds a year to the widow and children of my brother) to my faithful friends, John Horton, merchant, George Wolff, merchant, and William Marriott, stock-broker, all of London, IN TRUST, for the general fund of the Methodist Conference, to be disposed by the said Conference in carrying on the work of God, by itinerant preachers, on condition that they permit the following committee: Thomas Coke, James Creighton, Peard Dickinson, Thomas Rankin, George Whitfield, and the London Assistant, for the time being, still to superintend the printing-press, and to employ Hannah Paramore and George Paramore, as heretofore, unless four of the committee judge a change to be needful.—I give the books, furniture, and whatever belongs to me in the three houses at Kingswood, IN TRUST, to Thomas Coke, Alexander Mather, and Henry Moore, to be still employed in teaching and maintaining the children of poor travelling preachers.—I give to Thomas Coke, Dr. John Whitehead, and Henry Moore, all the books which are in my study and bed-chamber at London, and in my studies elsewhere, IN TRUST, for the use of the preachers who shall labour there from time to time.—I give the coins, and whatever else is in the drawer of my bureau at London, to my dear grand-daughters, Mary and Jane Smith.—I give all my manuscripts to Thomas Coke, Dr. John Whitehead, and Henry Moore, to be burnt or published, as they see good.—I give whatever money remains in my bureau, or pockets, at my decease, to be equally divided between Thomas Brisco, William Collins, John Easton, and James Brown.—I desire my gowns, cassocks, sashes and bands, may remain at the chapels, for the use of the clergymen attending there.—I desire the London Assistant, for the time being, to divide the

the rest of my wearing-apparel between those four of the travelling preachers that want it most, only my pelfise I give to the Rev. Mr. Creighton, my watch to my friend, Jos. Bradford, my gold seal to Eliz. Ritchie.—I give my chaise and horses to James Ward and Charles Wheeler, IN TRUST, to be sold, and the money divided, one-half to Hannah Abbot, and the other to the poor members of the select society. Out of the first money which arises from the sale of books, I bequeath to my dear sister, Martha Hall, (if alive,) forty pounds; to Mr. Creighton aforesaid, forty pounds; and to the Rev. Mr. Heath, sixty pounds. And whereas I am empowered, by a late deed, to name the persons who are to preach in the new chapel in London, (the clergymen for a continuance;) and by another deed, to name a committee for appointing preachers in the new chapel at Bath.—I do hereby appoint John Richardson, Thomas Coke, James Creighton, and Peard Dickinson, clerks, Alexander Mather, William Thompson, Henry Moore, Andrew Blair, Jos. Bradford, James Rogers, and William Myles, to preach in the new chapel at London, and to be the committee for appointing preachers in the new chapel at Bath.—I likewise appoint Henry Brooke, painter, Arthur Keen, gent. and William Whetstone, stationer, all of Dublin, to receive the annuity of five pounds, (English,) left to Kingswood school by the late Roger Shiel, Esquire.—I give six pounds to be divided among the six poor men, named by the assistants, who shall carry my body to the grave; for, I particularly desire, there may be no horse, no coach, no escutcheon, no pomp, except the tears of them that loved me, and are following me to Abraham's bosom.—I solemnly adjure my executors, in the name of God, punctually to observe this.—Lastly, I give to each of those travelling preachers, who shall remain in the connexion six months after my decease, as a little token of my love, the eight volumes of sermons.—I appoint John Horton, George Wolff, and William Marriott, aforesaid, to be the executors of this my Last Will and Testament: for which trouble they will receive no recompense till the resurrection of the just. Witness my hand and seal, the 20th of February, 1789.

JOHN WESLEY,

L. S.

Signed, sealed, and delivered by the said, testator, as and for his Last Will and Testament, in the presence of us,

WM CLULOW,
ELIZA. CLULOW.

Should

Should there be any part of my personal estate undisposed of by this my Will, I give the same unto my two nieces, Elizabeth Ellison and Susannah Collet, equally.

JOHN WESLEY.

Witness,
WM CLULOW.
ELIZA. CLULOW.

February the 25th, 1789.

I give my types, printing-presses, and every thing pertaining thereto, to Mr. Thomas Rankin and Mr. George Whitefield, IN TRUST, for the use of the Conference.

JOHN WESLEY.

PROVED at London, with two codicils, the 16th day of March, 1791, before the Worshipful George Harris, Doctor of Laws and Surrogate, by the oaths of John Horton, Esq. George Wolff, Esq. and William Marriott, the executors named in the Will, to whom administration was granted, having been first sworn duly to administer.

J. WISE.

GEO. GOSTLING, } Deputy
JAMES TOWNLEY, } Registers.
R. DODWELL, }

March, 1791.

IT

IT seems that the Reverend Mr. Wesley made this Will to supply the deficiency of the two deeds alluded to, otherwise I think it displays an ample field for litigation. But as no *Strictures* or *Remarks* can with propriety be made on the Will independent of the Deeds, I shall reserve them for the Second Part, and make only a few observations here:—Mr. Wesley has given his MSS. to be burnt, or published, as may be thought best. In some hands they may be turned to better account than either burning or publishing—Suppose they were sold as relics! Who among his followers would not give a shilling for a sheet of his own *hand-writing*? What a fortune might be made even at this low price! To each of the travelling preachers who remain in the connection *six months*, the eight volumes of sermons. If it was *twelve months*, few, I believe, would come in for this: perhaps they may hold together *six months*. A PROPHECY, in the Second Part, will explain this.

THE Public is respectfully informed, that the Second Part (now in great forwardness) will be published as soon as possible: Price One Shilling: Embellished with a striking likeness of the Reverend Mr. Wesley, from an original whole-length portrait, universally allowed to be the most accurate ever taken, and from which no copy or print has yet been done.

*To which also will be added, Private Correspondence, or a Series of Letters from the Reverend Mr. Wesley to * ****, and of which the Editor flatters himself, that the gentlemen to whom his papers are bequeathed are not in possession of copies.*



INTRODUCTION.

IT has been the practice of some late eminent biographers, to give the history of their own lives before they enter upon those of their heroes; which practice is confirmed by custom and sanctioned by honourable authority, although the public have justly condemned it as vain and impertinent. It is not, therefore, that I defy public censure, or that I am at all ambitious of literary fame, which, indeed I have not the vanity to expect from the following pages; but because it is absolutely necessary to secure its claim to authenticity, as this will, most undoubtedly, be followed by many spurious and surreptitious accounts of Mr. Wesley, replete with miracles, enthusiasm, ignorance, and falsehood, rendered subservient to the wicked purposes of exciting the admiration

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ration and astonishment of the weak and credulous, though sincere, Christians, to the great hindrance of the gospel of Christ, and the general perversion of morality. No honest man will take this to himself, I shall therefore spare personal reflections, lest I should give offence.

I have the honor to be related to the Rev. Mr. Wesley, his sister being my grand-mother. I received the early part of my education at Kingwood School, in Gloucestershire, about three miles from Bristol; a most excellent seminary of virtue and learning, founded by Mr. Wesley about fifty years ago. As to my religion, I am, methodistically speaking, an *Hebrew of Hebrews*, that is, born of methodist parents, and educated in their principles; though I am, I thank God, pretty free from the prejudices which are with so much injustice imputed to them, I am, however, free to acknowledge my weakness, in having, at different periods of my life, embraced many very different tenets of religion: sometimes I have almost been a Calvinist, and tempted to believe in the horrible decree, maintaining opinions which I shudder at the recollection of! Who can, for a moment, harbour a thought that infinite Goodness and Mercy should

“Assign the unborn child its doom,

“And damn it from its mother’s womb.”

As

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At other times, I have harboured notions equally absurd and inconsistent; I mean the Antinomian Principle, ascribing to God, as the supreme good, unlimited and unconditional mercy. Again, I have been tempted to reject Revelation altogether, and formed a set of notions relative to the immortality of the soul, and of a future state of rewards and punishments, grounded on principles of reason and philosophy: which formed, as I then thought, a very pretty and unobjectionable theory; but which, at present, I consider as the most ridiculous jumble of incomprehensible nonsense and absurdity, supported with arguments so flimsy and contradictory, that I now wonder that there should be any stupid enough to advance them, and others weak enough to be convinced by them, in preference to the more rational and comfortable scheme of Scriptural Revelation. I can, however, allow them the same excuse that I made for myself:

Dum in dubio est animus, paulo momento huc illuc impellitur.

It is also customary for biographers to tell their readers what a biographer is. To expatiate upon the importance of his business. To inform them what qualities he ought to possess. And, finally, to assure them that he is, in every respect, perfectly

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well qualified for the very arduous task; being entirely divested of prejudice or favour, candid and impartial, willing to sacrifice friendship to truth: that personal regard, and even the ties of blood, weigh nothing with him, when opposed to his duty and respect to the public. I am free to confess that I have not all these pretensions to recommend my performance to public notice; but this I most faithfully promise, to adhere strictly to the truth, and to exercise as much candour as I can.

On a revival of what I have written, I am afraid the public will object, that I have betrayed too much partiality to Mr. Wesley. Possibly I may; but I hope the generous and indulgent public will favour a very young author with some of that candour in which he may be deficient: especially when they know his motives. Naturally of a very sanguine disposition, his passions may sometimes carry him beyond the bounds of reason or strict justice.

The candid will, I am convinced, excuse, if not approve, the warmth of my love, and almost idolatrous admiration of Mr. Wesley, whom I verily believe to be one of the most perfect characters, and perhaps, the best man this age has produced.

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duced. Viewing him in the multifarious character of *a Gentleman, a Scholar, a Poet, an Historian, a Philosopher, a Divine, and a Politician.*

As a gentleman, he was a pattern of politeness.

As a scholar, of the greatest erudition, (perhaps the best Grecian this country ever produced.) The very elegant simplicity of his style and manner was a perfect antidote to the affected pedantry of the schools.

As a poet, he was by no means contemptible, as the subjoined specimens will evince.

It was my intention at first to have inserted some specimens of Mr. Wesley's beauties as a poet; but, finding that to form an adequate idea of his merits it would be necessary to give specimens of the various kinds of poetical composition, such as Heroic, Epindaric, Lyric, &c. &c. in which he excelled, which would too much swell this introduction; I shall therefore apprise the reader that it is my intention to publish a little volume, intituled, the "*Beauties of the Wesleys,*" to which I refer him. I shall just observe, in all his poetic writings, he seems sensible of the

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justice of what Boileau insists as necessary in the composition of a good poem.

Quelque sujet qu'on traite, ou plaisante ou sublime,
Que toujours le bon sens s'accorde avec la rime ;
L'un l'autre vainement ils semblent se haïr,
La Rime est une esclave, & ne doit qu'obéir ;
Lors qu'à la bien chercher d'abord on s'évertue,
L'esprit à la trouver aisément s'habitue ;
Au jour de la raison sans peine elle fléchit,
Et, loin de la gêner, la sert et l'enrichit.
Mais, lors qu'on la néglige, elle devient rebelle,
Et, pour la rattraper, la sens court après elle,

I shall then appeal to every true judge of poetry, whether they do not possess the genuine spirit of poetry. If his various business would have permitted him to have cultivated that talent, I am persuaded he would have ranked in the first class of English Poets. However, what little he has written serves fully to exemplify Horace's remark,

Poeta nascitur, non fit.

He never applied himself to the study of Poetry, but only occasionally indulged himself in the exercise of that talent as a relief from the cares of his various employments: all which were subservient to his ruling passion,

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sion, popularity and the ambition of fame. But it was a godlike ambition! He thirsted after the glory of being beloved! and well he succeeded, for well he deserved. Every one who knew him, loved him: and the poor blessed him! Yet I hope, though it has pleased God to take their aged benefactor to himself, he will raise up to them a *friend*, and be to them himself a *Father*.

He was born to govern; the minds of men, and the hearts and purses of his followers, were at his absolute disposal. He might, perhaps, have accumulated the greatest fortune that ever was made by an individual, if he knew any other want of money than for the relief of necessity and the generous purposes of humanity.

In the warmth of admiration, excited by the qualities of his heart, I have digressed from the adornments of his mind and the versatility and strength of his genius. I will return to him as a Poet.

Horace, just quoted, brings to my remembrance a gentleman of considerable abilities, improved by a classical education, who was, unfortunately, desperately fond of poetry, and it was perhaps the

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only species of writing in which he would not have excelled, had he attempted it. But he would be a Poet. Accordingly he set about mechanically manufacturing an Heroic Poem. The method he pursued was as follows: Having written a very elegant and elaborate Heroic History (if I may so call it) in a measured sententious style: He studied *Horace*, *Aristotle*, *Bossus*, *Euripides*, *Plautus*, *Terence*, and *Byshe* in particular; and, at the end of twelve months intense study and unwearied application, he tacked rhymes to the end of his lines. I shall forbear to name the author or the work, as I should be sorry to injure a very worthy man by saying any thing that would affect the sale of his book. To those who have a true taste for poetry, I need not point out the work to which I allude.

As a proof that Mr. Wesley was born a poet, it is remarkable that the family seem to have been universally inspired by that divine spirit. His grandfather, father, mother, and brothers, were all poets, and not despicable ones. His elder brother, the Rev. Mr. S. Wesley, published a quarto volume of poems about sixty years ago, dedicated to Lord Oxford, his patron and particular friend. I will point out one poem in that collection which I think almost equal to any thing our language has produced, “*The*

Battle

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Battle of the Sexes:" This book is now very scarce and dear, and hardly known. It is to be regretted that it is not restored to the public. Mr. S. Wesley was intimately acquainted with *Addison*, *Pope*, and *Prior*: Mr. *Prior* had made very honourable mention of him, and Mr. *Pope* thought him and his father worthy a place in the *DUNCIAD*. I hope the public will allow me some claim to impartiality, after putting two of my relations in the *Dunciad*. And the celebrated Dr. Johnson has given a quotation from him in the grammar prefixed to his dictionary, as the best specimen of that kind of poetry: the lines are universally known; but many are ignorant of their author.

EPITAPH ON AN INFANT.

Beneath, a sleeping infant lies,
To earth whose ashes lent,
More glorious, shall hereafter rise,
Though not more innocent.
When the arch-angels trump shall blow,
And souls to bodies join,
'What crowds will wish, their lives below'
Had been as short as thine.

The beauty of the above can be felt as well as seen, therefore every one is a judge of its merit.

The

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The Rev. C. Wesley, who died in the year 1788, excelled in satirical poetry, which may be seen in a letter addressed to the citizens of London after the riots in 1780. It is no less remarkable, that Mr. Wesley's great grandfather, grandfather, father, and three brothers, were all, as he himself expressed it, preachers of righteousness, and all of them regularly ordained clergymen of the church of England, except his grandfather, who was a dissenting minister; concerning whom some curious anecdotes will be related in the course of this work.

His principal excellency as an Historian is, that his history is exactly suited to the people for whom it was written, being properly interspersed with remarkable instances of particular providence, &c. &c.

As a philosopher, much may be said. He sought wisdom in the simplicity of truth, and formed no dogmatical hypothesis which was not demonstrable from mathematical certainty, very properly rejecting the speculative theories of Visionaries and their metaphysical disquisitions and conjectures. Bold enough to attack even the *Copernican* and *Newtonian* systems of the universe.

Nihil

Nihil est in intellectu, quod non prius fuit in sensu.

ARIST.

That the world may judge for itself of his philosophical writings, I shall refer them to that truly valuable work, entitled "*A Survey of the wisdom of God in the Works of the Creation; or a Compendium of Natural Philosophy.*" I shall say little of the merits of this work; let it speak for itself. It may not be improper to notice, that it was very honourably mentioned by one of the professors at Oxford; and the late learned and excellent *archbishop Secker* gave testimony in its favour, calling it the most perfect and complete compendium of Philosophy he had ever seen. It may not be improper to remind those who may be inclined to peruse this work, from the above very honourable testimonies in its favour, that he should consider to whom it is written. It is addressed to the capacities and understanding of plain men, of good sense, and not to students in, or professors of, philosophy. The reverend author was himself as free from the prejudices which are so unjustly charged to his followers in general, as the most *rational* or *philosophical Christian* possibly could be: but, had it been written in a different style and full of scientific terms

terms and metaphysical subtleties, it would have intirely defeated the purpose for which it was written, not being intelligible to the readers. A man of sense and education may discern beauties and excellences in a simple and unaffected dress; but a man of sense, without the advantages of a classical education, cannot possibly discern the merit of a work of science wherein every other word is Greek or Latin. This is the fault not of the poverty of our language, but the affectation and *ignorance* of the learned. I might here enlarge upon this subject; but I shall only observe that the study of the Greek and Latin is merely for the name of the thing; this is a notorious truth, and innumerable are the living monuments of *learned ignorance*. I shall conclude this subject by observing, it is not at all necessary; and that most of our youths in genteel life waste their spring-time in learning a number of words which can never be of any use; and, in the acquisition of which, few, if any, find any pleasure; and it generally gives them a distaste for other useful branches of science, in which, if they had been early initiated, they would have been highly delighted, and made considerable progress before they arrive at that age, in which the passions are so violent in the pursuit of active animal enjoyments, that they find
neither

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neither time or inclination for the acquirement of any other kind of knowledge, except what they call *knowledge of the world, of men, and manners*; a knowledge which they pursue with an eagerness, which frequently proves destructive of health, and not unfrequently cuts them off in the prime of life. These are the direful effects of making boys learn Latin and Greek, to which, generally speaking, they are as much averse as to flogging and confinement. When I myself was at school, I remember several boys who would very willingly have undergone a pretty severe discipline to have been excused their Greek tasks. I will just add, that, when a boy discovers the least inclination for the study, let him by all means pursue it. I would have them all tried in a judicious manner, and those alone who possess a poetical turn will engage in it with an avidity, which renders it no toil but a pleasure. I am fully convinced that every one naturally possesses talents for some branch of science or another. If, for instance, a boy discovers an early inclination to arithmetic, and a natural facility in counting, and at the same time an aversion to the languages, by all means promote the study his genius naturally inclines him to, and he may one day become eminent in the noble science of figures. If a boy discovers early ingenuity in making wheel-bar-

rows

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rows and coaches, &c. it is a certain proof he has a good mechanical head, and, if he is not checked, may one day become an useful member of society. Again, if a boy is fond of building batteries, castles, and fortifications, of mud and stones, and is fond of playing at soldiers, or if his genius rather inclines him to naval architecture and sea-fights, indulge his fancy in these things, and very possibly he will become a distinguished general, an admiral, an engineer, or an architect.

I was once in a company of mechanics, into which a *scholar* had introduced himself, to display his learning I suppose. The conversation was about bricks and building in general. One of the company, a carpenter, was declaiming against the bad quality of bricks that are used in modern buildings: and saying, that, when he was a young man, they were much superior. The *scholar* said, *bricks* and *tiles*, among the Romans, were used in buildings, pavements, particularly of their baths, &c. &c. and were called *lateres*. The carpenter thanked him for his information, and asked him how the Romans, as he called them, made their bricks?—The scholar replied, he did not know exactly their component parts, the ingredients, their properties, or qualities, or dimensions, but that they were called *lateres*, he was certain: a word of Greek derivation, &c. &c.

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The carpenter said, Well, to be sure it is a fine thing to be a *scholar*, for the sake of knowing two names for the same thing: he thanked the learned gentleman for what he had *learnt* him, and would, if he pleased, *learn* him something in return: he would tell him how a brick was *made*. Sir, replied the scholar, it is beneath the *dignity* of a man of *learning* to acquire mechanical knowledge. The carpenter hoped the gentleman was not affronted; but he thought it more necessary to know the nature of any thing than a hundred names of it. I remember, when I was at school, there was one young gentleman in particular, whose father was a clergyman, and determined to give him a *liberal* education: that is, to be well read in the Greek and Roman classics. Unluckily, the boy was most incorrigibly dull: he was now fifteen years old, in five of which he had endeavoured, with all his might, to gain some little knowledge of those languages, but was so amazingly stupid, that he never could be made to understand clearly a single *Grammar-Rule*; but this same boy, before he was eight years old, could comprehend very clearly the *Rule of Three*, notwithstanding every thing the masters could do to prevent his gaining knowledge that could only qualify him for a counting-house. Query, might not that boy have become a skilful mathematician?

I shall

I shall just add, concerning his philosophy, that it contains, among other excellent things, a very ingenious Essay, to prove the Antients superior to the Moderns in most Branches of the Arts and Sciences; and, A Treatise on the various Methods of Philosophizing among different Nations and in different Ages.

As a politician, Mr. Wesley distinguished himself in a very eminent manner by his writings during the American war, and at other periods. Among which his *Letters to General and Lord Howe*, the *Calm Address to the American Colonies*, *Answer to Dr. Price*, his *Thoughts on Slavery*, *Liberty*, the *Origin of Power*, &c. &c. (all which will pass a regular review in the second part of this work,) are hasty performances which display wonderful abilities as a politician; but not sufficiently studied to be entirely free from exception. Indeed he had no time for *foreign politics*: The regular discipline, he has established among the Methodists, in itself constituting a complete and wonderful system of policy. A late writer observes, that the discipline of his sect will scarcely yield in comparison to that of the Jesuits in Paraguay; with this additional circumstance, that the Jesuits formed their subjects into a distinct community, while
Mr.

Mr. Wesley has maintained the constitution he has established among a people scattered through every part of a great, a powerful, and a luxurious nation.

It is truly admirable with what amazing economy he distributed his own time, and the time of his *preachers* and assistants. At the annual conferences, the plan of operations was laid and settled, both for himself and the preachers for the ensuing year, their circuits appointed, their duty explained to them, their rules laid down for the regulation of their behaviour, which indeed was very necessary for some; for, while they acted agreeably to his orders and admonitions, they might, among the illiterate and weak, acquit themselves with some degree of credit both to themselves and to him; for, Mr. Wesley judged it expedient, that every individual should have printed directions, called Minutes of the Conference, containing rules, directing them in every necessary particular of business and behaviour. With respect to the ordering his own time, he gave himself rather greater latitude; inasmuch as he was not obliged to give an account of his labours, although he settled the plan for himself, yet he left himself at liberty, if he should think it convenient, to swerve from it.

But, however, in general he was so exact in the distribution of his time, and so punctual in the appointments which he annually made with every society in the kingdom, that he could tell almost to a certainty where he should be, and how employed every day, and almost every hour of the day, for twelve months following the conference.

He regularly rose by four o'clock in the morning, summer and winter; often preaching four sermons in the course of the day, besides giving audience to the different classes of his followers, who attended him at stated periods. The preachers are quartered upon the people in the different towns of the kingdom, the head-quarters being fixed in some town that can bear the burden, and their circuit round that town extends from ten to thirty or forty miles, and leave those towns as he thinks proper to direct, which sometimes is necessary, the preacher not always suiting the people, from various causes. I do not here mean the most distant reflection on Mr. Wesley or on his preachers in general; if some of their lives were a scandal and reproach to the gospel and to the people, he either did not know it, or would not believe it, making it a point never to believe an evil report of any man; but, when he was confirmed in the truth of any accusation laid against any of them, they were immediately cashiered;

cashiered; much less would I be understood to reflect on *Methodism* as doctrine, or on the *Methodists* as a people; far from it. As a doctrine, it is perhaps the least liable to exception of any preached; and, as a people, they are, generally speaking, honest, upright, men, who make the law of God the rules of their lives; and regulate it by the dictates of conscience, unbiassed by prejudice, and uninfluenced by interest.

As a divine, and controversial writer in divinity, I cannot do better than refer my readers to his works, particularly his Sermons, and very numerous publications concerning Predestination, Free Will, Popery, &c. As many will not think it worth their while to read his Sermons, I will just give an extract from the Preface to a collection of Sermons, in four vols. fourth edit. 1787.

“ Nothing here appears in an elaborate, elegant, or oratorical, dress. If it had been my desire or design to write thus, my leisure would not permit. But, in truth, I at present designed nothing less; for I now write (as I generally speak) *ad populum*: to the bulk of mankind, to those who neither relish or understand the art of speaking: but who notwithstanding are competent judges of those truths, which are necessary

to their present and future happiness. I mention this, that curious readers may save themselves the labour of seeking for what they will not find.

“I design plain truth for plain people. Therefore of set purpose I abstain from all nice and philosophical speculations, from all perplex and intricate reasonings; and, as far as possible, from even the show of learning, unless in sometimes citing the original Scriptures. I labour to avoid all words which are not easy to be understood, all which are not used in common life: and, in particular, those kinds of technical terms, that so frequently occur in bodies of divinity, those modes of speaking which men of reading are intimately acquainted with, but which to common people are an unknown tongue. Yet I am not assured that I do not sometimes slide into them unawares: it is so extremely natural to imagine, that a word which is familiar to ourselves is so to all the world.

“Nay, my design is, in some sense, to forget all that ever I have read in my life. I mean to speak, in the general, as if I had never read one author, ancient or modern, (always excepting the inspired.) I am persuaded, that, on the one hand, this may be a means of enabling me
more

more clearly to express the sentiments of my heart, while I simply follow the chain of my own thoughts, without entangling myself with those of other men : and that, on the other, I shall come with fewer weights upon my mind, with less of prejudice and prepossession, either to search for myself, or to deliver to others, the naked truths of the Gospel.

“ To candid, reasonable, men, I am not afraid to lay open what have been the inmost thoughts of my heart. I have thought, “ I am the creature of a day, passing through life, as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit come from God, and returning to God : just hovering over the great gulph ; till, a few moments hence, I am no more seen ; I drop into an unchangeable eternity ! I want to know one thing, the way to heaven : how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way ; for this very end he came from heaven. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that book ! At any price give me the book of God ! I have it : here is knowlege enough for me. Let me be *Homo unius libri*. Here then I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone : only God is here. In his presence I open, I read, his book ; for this end, to find the way

to heaven. Is there a doubt concerning the meaning of what I read? Does any thing appear dark and intricate? I lift up my heart to the Father of Light. Lord, is it not thy word, *If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God? Thou givest liberally, and upbraidest not. Thou hast said, If any be willing to do thy will, he shall know. I am willing to do. Let me know thy will.*" I then search after and consider parallel passages of Scripture, *comparing spiritual things with spiritual.* I meditate thereon, with all the attention and earnestness of which my mind is capable. If any doubt still remains, I consult those who are experienced in the things of God: and then, their writings, whereby, being dead, they yet speak. And, what I thus learn, that I teach.

"I have accordingly set down, in the following Sermons, what I find in the Bible concerning the way to heaven; with a view to distinguish this way of God from all those which are the inventions of men. I have endeavoured to describe the true, the scriptural, experimental, religion, so as to omit nothing which is a real part thereof, and to add nothing thereto which is not. And herein it is more especially my desire, first, to guard those who are just setting their faces
towards

toward heaven, (and who, having little acquaintance with the things of God, are the more liable to be turned out of the way,) from formality, from mere outside religion, which has almost driven heart-religion out of the world: and, secondly, to warn those who know the religion of the heart, the faith which worketh by love, lest at any time they make void the law through faith, and so fall back into the snare of the devil.

“By the advice and at the request of some of my friends, I have prefixt to the other sermons, contained in this volume, three sermons of my own, and one of my brother’s, preached before the University of *Oxford*. My design required some discourses on those heads. And I preferred these before any others, as being a stronger answer than any which can be drawn up now, to those who have frequently asserted, “That we have changed our doctrine of late, and do not preach, now, what we did some years ago.” Any man of understanding may now judge for himself, when he has compared the latter with the former Sermons.

“But some may say, I have mistaken the way myself, although I take upon me to teach

it to others. It is probable, many will think this, and it is very possible that I have. But, I trust, whereinfoever I have mistaken, my mind is open to conviction. I sincerely desire to be better informed. I say to God and man, 'What I know not, teach thou me!'

"Are you persuaded, you see more clearly than I? It is not unlikely you may. Then, treat me, as you would desire to be treated yourself upon a change of circumstances. Point me out a better way than I have yet known. Shew me it is so, by plain proof of scripture: and, if I linger in the path I have been accustomed to tread, and therefore am unwilling to leave it, labour with me a little; take me by the hand, and lead me as I am able to hear. But be not displeased if I intreat you not to beat me down in order to quicken my pace: I can go but feebly and slowly at best; then, I should not be able to go at all. May I not request of you, farther, not to give me hard names, in order to bring me into the right way. Suppose I was ever so much in the wrong, I doubt this would not set me right. Rather, it would make me run so much the farther from you, and so get more and more out of the way.

"Nay,

“ Nay, perhaps, if you are angry, so shall I be too; and then there will be small hopes of finding the truth. If once anger arise, *ἡνὶς καίπνοος*, (as *Homer* somewhere expresses it,) this smoke will so dim the eyes of my soul, that I shall be able to see nothing clearly. For God’s sake, if it be possible to avoid it, let us not provoke one another to wrath. Let us not kindle in each other this fire of hell; much less blow it up into a flame. If we could discern truth by that dreadful light, would it not be loss rather than gain? For, how far is love, even with many wrong opinions, to be preferred before truth itself without love? We may die without the knowlege of many truths, and yet be carried into *Abraham’s* bosom. But, if we die without love, what will knowlege avail? Just as much as it avails the devil and his angels!

“ The God of love forbid we should ever make the trial! May he prepare us for the knowlege of all truth, by filling our hearts with all his love, and with all joy and peace in believing!”

Mr. Wesley, as a philosopher, did not neglect the study of physic and natural history; physic he practised with great success; his little book containing

taining a collection of receipts, or an easy and natural method of curing most diseases, whatever degree of merit the faculty will please to allow it, certain it is, that it has done a great deal of good among the lower class of people. If on its first publication it was exceptionable from some errors, as possibly it might be, as a very learned and experienced gentleman of the faculty was pleased to notice them, they are now removed, and may be consulted with the greatest safety, as nothing in the smallest degree pernicious or dangerous is in the present corrected work. In his preface to this valuable little book, speaking of the progress of physical knowledge, and comparing it in its present scientific to that of its primitive state, he observes, that in process of time, men of a philosophical turn of mind were not satisfied with knowing that this herb or root will cure such wounds or disorders, but must account for their properties. They examined the human body in all its parts, the nature of the flesh, veins, arteries, nerves, the structure of the brain, heart, lungs, stomach, bowels, with the springs of the animal functions. They explored the several kinds of animal, mineral, and vegetable, substances. And hence the whole order of physic, which had obtained to that time, began gradually to be inverted. Men of learning began to set ex-
perience

perience aside to build physic upon hypotheses; to form theories of diseases and their cure, and to substitute these in the place of experiment. As theories increased, simple medicines were more and more disregarded and disused, till, in a course of years, the greater part of them were forgotten in the politer nations: and in their room abundance of new ones introduced by reasoning; speculative men, and those more and more difficult to be applied, as being more remote from common observation. Hence the rules for the application of theory, and medical books, were immensely multiplied: till at length physic became an abstruse science, getting out of the reach of ordinary men. Physicians were now had in admiration as persons something more than human. Profit and honour attended their employ, two weighty reasons for keeping the bulk of mankind at a distance, that they might not pry into the mysteries of the profession. To this end they increased, by design, those difficulties which began by accident, filling their writings with abundance of technical terms of science utterly unintelligible to plain men. Affecting to deliver their rules in an abstruse and philosophical manner, representing the critical knowledge of anatomy, natural philosophy, (some insisting even on that of astronomy and astrology too,) as necessary previous to the

art of healing. Those, who understood only how to restore the sick to health, they branded with the name of Empirics. They introduced into practice abundance of compound medicines consisting of so many ingredients that it was impossible for common people to know which it was that wrought the cure, abundance of exotics, neither the nature of names of which their own countrymen understood: of chemical, such as they neither had skill, fortune, or time, to prepare: and many dangerous ones, which could not be used, without hazarding life, but by the advice of a physician. Thus a vast majority of mankind were utterly cut off from helping themselves or their neighbours, or even daring to attempt it. The Reverend Author goes on with these observations, and speaking highly of doctors *Sydenham*, *Dover*, and *Cheyne*. Of Dr. Cheyne he relates the following anecdote. Being prest by some of his friends for some passages in his works, which too much countenance modern practice, he answered "O sir, we must do something to *oblige the faculty*, or they will tear us in pieces." Mr. Wesley particularly insists on the necessity of applying to a physician that fears God. And I think he may be physically justified in it, for, I verily believe, in many cases *Faith* will do more than *Physic*. For, a man being inspired with confidence

dence in the skill and integrity of his physician, it helps the spirits so much, that, if a physician prescribes only innocent things, it is a chance if the patient does not recover. This doctrine is as old as Lord Verulam, who very strongly insists on the necessity of keeping up the spirits; and the spirits of *those*, who are not much given to thought and reflection, are very easily kept up by the consolation of religion; and the confidence it inspires in the skill of a religious physician, who such are inclined to think has more immediate assistance from the Great Physician, the fountain of health, and of every blessing. He adds, "Above all, add to the rest that old unfashionable medicine, prayer, and have faith in God, who *killeth and maketh alive, who bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up.* And I think it would not be amiss if every physician prescribed it.

I will once more return to Mr. Wesley as a philosopher, and give the reader a specimen of his writings in an extract from his preface to the compendium of philosophy: being fully convinced that he can much better recommend himself to the public than any thing I can say in his praise.

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“ I have long desired to see such a *compendium of natural philosophy* as was, 1. Not too diffuse, not expressed in many words, but comprised in so moderate a compass, as not to require any large expence, either of time or money: 2. Not maimed or imperfect, but containing the heads of whatever (after all our discoveries) is known with any degree of certainty, either with regard to the earth or heavens. And this I wanted to see, 3. In the plainest dress, simply and nakedly expressed, in the most clear, easy, and intelligible, manner, that the nature of the things would allow: particularly free from all the jargon of *mathematics*, which is mere *beathen greek* to common readers. At the same time I wished to see this short, full, plain, account of the visible creation, directed to its right end: not barely to entertain an idle, barren, curiosity, but to display *the invisible things of God*, his power, wisdom, and goodness.

“ But I cannot find such a treatise as this in any modern, any more than antient, language. And, I am certain, there is none such in the *English* tongue. What comes nearest to it, of any thing I have seen, is Mr. Ray's *Wisdom of God in the Creation*, Mr. Derham's *Physico and Astro Theology*, Nieuwentyt's *Religious Philosopher*, Mather's
Christian

INTRODUCTION.

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Christian Philosopher, and Nature delineated. But none of these, singly, answers the Design. And who will be at the pains to extract the substance of them all, and to add the later discoveries, of which they had little knowledge and therefore could take but little notice? This is a *desideratum* still; and one that a lover of mankind would rejoice to see even tolerably supplied.

“ I am thoroughly sensible there are many who have far more ability, as well as leisure, for such a work than myself. But, as none of them undertakes it, I have myself made some little attempt in the ensuing volumes. Herein, following Mr. Derham's plan, I divided the work into *text* and *notes*. The text is, in great measure, translated from the *Latin* work of *John Francis Budaeus*, the late celebrated professor of philosophy in the university of *Jena*, in *Germany*. But I have found occasion to retrench, inlarge, or alter, every chapter, and almost every section. So that it is now, I believe, not only *pure*, containing nothing false or uncertain, but as *full* as any tract can be expected to be, which is comprised in so narrow a compass; and likewise *plain*, clear, and intelligible, to one of a tolerable understanding. The notes contain the sum of what is most valuable in the above-named writers: to which are added the choicest

choicest discoveries both of our own and of the foreign societies; chiefly extracted from that great treasury of learning, *Mr. Chambers's Dictionary*. These likewise, I trust, are as plain and clear as the nature of the things spoken will allow: Although some of them, I know, will not be understood by an unlearned or inattentive reader.

“ Meantime I must apprize the reader, that I have sometimes a little digressed by reciting both uncommon appearances of nature, and uncommon instances of art: And yet this is not properly a digression from the main design I have in view. For surely, in these appearances also, the wisdom of God is displayed: Even that manifold wisdom, which is able to answer the same ends by so various means. And those surprizing instances of art do likewise reflect glory upon him, whose *Spirit in Man giveth that Wisdom, whose Inspiration teacheth Understanding*.

“ It will be easily observed, that I endeavour, throughout, not to *account for* things, but only to *describe* them. I undertake barely to set down what *appears* in nature, not the *cause* of those appearances. The *facts* lie within the reach of our senses and understanding; the *causes* are more remote. *That things are so* we know with certainty:

tainty: But *why they are so* we know not. In many cases we cannot know; and, the more we inquire, the more we are perplexed and entangled. God *hath so done his works* that we may admire and adore: But *we cannot search them out to perfection.*

“And does not this open to us another prospect? although one we do not care to dwell upon. Does not the same survey of the creation, which shews us the wisdom of God, shew the astonishing ignorance and short-sightedness of man? For, when we have finished our survey, what do we know? How inconceivably little! Is not every thinking man constrained to cry out, and is *this all?* Do all the boasted discoveries of so *enlightened* an age amount to no more than this? *Vain man would be wise!* Would know all things! But with how little success does he attempt it? How small a part do we know even of the things that encompass us on every side? I mean, as to the very *fact*: For, as to the *reasons* of almost every thing which we see, hear, or feel, after all our researches and disquisitions, they are hid in impenetrable darkness.

“I trust therefore the following tract may, in some degree, answer both these important pur-
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poses. It may be a means, on the one hand, of humbling the pride of man, by shewing that he is surrounded on every side with things which he can no more account for than for immensity or eternity: And it may serve, on the other, to display the amazing power, wisdom and goodness of the great Creator; to warm our hearts and to fill our mouths with wonder, love, and praise!"

I will now endeavour to comprise, in a few words, a character, which I conceive to be just, of this very amiable man: whether it is so or not the public will judge for themselves. But, making some allowance for my partiality as a relation, those who were ignorant of him may rely upon its truth, and those, who had the happiness to know him, will confirm it.

In his person was united, as in a center, an assemblage of every virtue and accomplishment, that can dignify and adorn human nature. If he possessed any virtue in a super-eminent degree, it was Humanity. If he had any failings, (as the most exalted character is not free from failings and weaknesses,) they were Ambition and Love. Whether these are virtues or vices, people will think differently: for my part, I consider ambition as the noblest

noblest passion of the soul, and, where humanity is not sacrificed to secure its object, it becomes a most exalted virtue. It may be objected, that if Mr. Wesley was ambitious, why not turn his views to the court?—Because he knew that great interest, much humility, and fawning, would be necessary to procure him any considerable share in government, and he would have scorned being any thing less than a PRIME MINISTER.

Aut Cæsar, aut nihil.

Ambition is, like love, impatient
Both of delays and rivals.

SHAK.

With respect to his attachment to women—is there any great crime in that? If there is, I am sorry for it; for I am not ashamed to own myself guilty in a very high degree. I love them with all my heart! I admire them in all their actions! I almost worship them! And who of any sensibility can view the most perfect work of created nature, without being inspired with an idea of their divinity! Whoever speaks of an angel without thinking of a woman—

“The pride of nature, and the joy of sense!”

I believe the majority of the men will be of the same opinion; and few women will respect

his memory the less for the particular attention he paid their sex. Besides, even admitting the criminality of this passion, while the soul inhabits this tabernacle of flesh, it will be subjected in some measure to its natural inclinations; and those who are of a warm constitution, and such generally are most disposed to the exercise of every virtue, although their natural violence may sometimes carry them to opposite extremes; such too are those who have souls formed for love, and hearts susceptible of every tender emotion. Never yet was there a poet or a man of genius who was not of an amorous and generous disposition; and, in proportion as the heart of man is inspired with gratitude and admiration by objects of sense, so is his soul elevated to the most exalted ideas of the Deity. The man, who considers the objects and blessings with which he is surrounded as not worth a thought, has, in my opinion, very little of the love of God. If any man pretends to the love of God, and does not properly esteem the creatures of his kind providence, I think that love is of a very eccentric kind. If we really love the Almighty Author of our being, and of surrounding nature, let us shew our gratitude in admiring and enjoying his works.

I would

I would not here be understood to throw out the most distant insinuation, that any thing that may have been said of Mr. Wesley has the least foundation in truth : I only mean it as an humble attempt to justify my own principles. On the contrary, I believe them to have originated among his numerous enemies amongst the Calvinists, who industriously propagated every thing that could affect his character, whilst the violence of opposition raged with such ungovernable fury against his benevolent and rational doctrine of *Universal Redemption* and the *Free Agency of Man* : or from the wickedness of individuals, from whom, even if true, (which I cannot for a moment imagine,) he might have expected better treatment ; so certain am I, that every one that knew him ought to have loved and admired him ; and those, who wanted assistance at his hands, always had reason to be grateful.

END OF THE FIRST PART.

INTRODUCTION

I would not have been allowed to write one
the most ill-considered and unimportant thing that
may have been said of the history of the British
Islands in the last century. I have meant to be as humble
as possible in my style and manner. On the con-
trary, I have been so far from attempting to do
more than to give a plain and simple account of the
history of the British Islands, and to show the
progress of the human mind, and the state of
the human mind, and the state of the human mind.



the history of the British Islands, and to show the
progress of the human mind, and the state of
the human mind, and the state of the human mind.

End of the First Part

